

THE  
TRAGEDY  
OF  
ANTIGONE,

*The Theban Princess.*

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Written by T. May.

*First Edition.*

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TO  
THE MOST WORTHILY  
HONOURED, ENDYMION,

PORTER Esquire  
one of his Maiesties  
Bedchamber.

SIR.

 His Tragedy of *Antigone* may perchance  
(considering the sub-  
ject of it) be thought  
a Poem too sad and  
balefull to bee read with pleasure,

A 3

or

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

or presented with delight vpon any Stage. I confesse the saddnesse of it; but if it suffer for that, it will raise a question more general; Why tragedies haue at any time bin allowed? Why the ruines and calamities of some men haue beene represented as a delightfome pastime to other men? Why those ancient witts, whom *Greece* in her learned'st times did highly admire, haue chosen for their deathlesse Poems almost no other arguments then those calamitous storyes of *Thebes*, *Mycenæ*, *Troy*, and, most of all, this very discourse of the fatall and incestuous family of *Oedipus*? where almost  
all



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

all the passages are so farre ( a man would thinke ) from delighting men, that they might mooue a suffering euen in the furies themselves? and why the greatest Princes, both *Gracian* and *Roman*, in their highest iollity haue not onely beheld with delight the presentation of them: but for their owne excercise ( as many of them as haue had the itch of writing ) haue chosen these arguments, and made them into **T**ragedyes? **V**Why this hath been generally so ( though the cause neede no Apology, at least not mine ) I will venture some few coniectures. All the spectatours are

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

either wretched or fortunate; the wretched in sad storyes are in some sort eased by fellowship in woe, or delighted with tragicall expressions, as being somewhat of kindred with their owne thoughts; those that are fortunate, are affected, in such shewes, either with delight, or wholesome sorrow; if they be delighted, it is in the tast of their own prosperity, which appeares greater, set off by an object of such contrariety; & this delight is not out of malice (as pleased with the woes of others) but acknowledgement to those high powers which made the difference; if they be sorrowfull, their sorrow is  
wholesome



*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

wholsome; for as in melancholly diseases merry tales are vsed to assise nature: so in too great a ioy, & wantonnes of the soule, such sad representations are as a good allay, depressing the leuity of their thoughts to such a meane, as is fit to entertaine the best contemplations. Moreouer Tragedyes (besides the state of them) are pleasing in the expresseion, forasmuch as saddnesse doth vsually afford the best straines of writing: to omit other instances, loue it selfe (the vsuall argument of our new Comedy) is there best written, where it is most distressed, and in despairing passion; that part of the  
Comedy

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Comedy seeming best, which is  
nearest tragedy, in that straine also  
goe most, or the best of loue-sonnets  
that now are made. But I wander too  
far in this theame; excuse me (no-  
ble Sir) for pressing so much vpon  
your patience, the worke it selfe,  
did it not more trust to your good-  
nesse then it's owne worth,  
would thinke it selfe too long to be  
read by you. If you accept it, it seekes  
no farther. To speake of you as you  
deserue, I dare not, since your known  
modesty would checke my pen: but  
this I dare say; there are no arts or  
armes, or any other true abilities, that  
euer had the happinesse to know  
you,



*The Epistle*

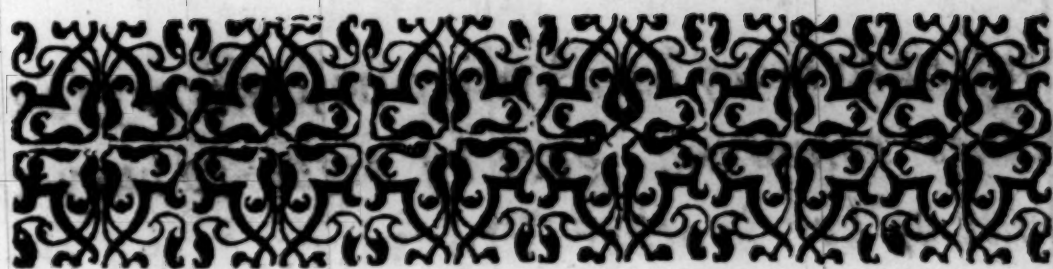
you, but will spread your worth,  
& thinke you most worthy to stand  
(as you doe) in the presence of a  
King, wishing you long blest in his  
Maiesties fauour, & the King blest  
with moe such seruants as you are.  
God, after all, grant vnto you his  
blessed presence ; and so I rest

Euer to be commanded by you,

*Tho : May.*







A short argument of this  
Tragedy.

**H**Teocles and Polynices sonnes  
to Oedipus by that incestuous  
marriage with his mother Loca-  
sta, having slaine each other in a  
single combate, Creon is crowned King of  
Thebes. Creon denyes to the Argiue bodies  
funerall rites, which among the heathen, was  
therefore esteemed a cruell punishment, because  
they thought the soules of them, that were vn-  
buried, wandered an hundred yeares before  
they could be transported by Charon into Ely-  
sium. Aemon the sonne of King Creon fal-  
ling in loue with Antigone, the pious daugh-  
ter of Oedipus, cannot obtaine his fathers  
consent

consent to marry her. Antigone, contrary to the Kings command, goes by night to bury the body of her brother Polynices, and there meetes with Argia the widow of Polynices, and daughter to king Adrastus. They are surprised: Aemon attempting their rescue is wounded, and lyes a while conceal'd. Antigone by Creon is doomed to death. Aemon killeth himselfe. Theseus killeth Creon, and giueth funerall to the Græcians bodies.







THE  
TRAGEDY  
OF ANTIGONE  
*The Theban Princeſſe.*

---

Actus Primus, ſcena prima.

*Oedipus* led by *Antigone*.

*Oedipus.*

**L** Et go this wicked hand; oh daughter leaue me,  
Leaue me while thou art vertuous, before (nelle  
Th' infection of my crimes do blaſt thy good-  
Or draw ſome plague vpon thee; this dire head  
Abhorr'd by heauen and earth, liuing in *Thebes*  
Brought forth a peſtilence, which helpe of art

B

Could

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Could neuer cure, vntill, by heauens decree,  
Most hatefull I was banish'd from the City.  
Oh Daughter leaue me.

*Anti.* Neuer, neuer Sir.

While you are heere, *Cytheron's* craggy mount  
Is my abode, and farre preferr'd before  
*Labdacus* stately palace, or the towers  
Of wealthy *Thebes*, for which my brothers strue.  
What there I lou'd, I am posselt of heere,  
My Father's presence; doe not banish me  
Thither againe; that place is banishment,  
While you are heere; what but impiety,  
And brothers hatred shall I there behold?

*Oed.* Thou art too good, *Antigone*, thy birth  
Would make me loue my crimes, but that all sense  
Of vertue, as of light, is dead in me.

If thou wilt guide me, guide me to that high  
And fatall cliffe, from whence vnhappy *I* no  
Pursu'd, leap'd downe into the seas, and mett  
The danger which shee fled, there let me ly  
Conceal'd for euer from the eye of heauen.

Ah could I kill my memory as well,  
That no succeeding ages might relate  
The name and story of sad *Oedipus*!

*Anti.* Be not vniust vnto your selfe to thinke  
You haue deserued death; the gods call that  
Mis-hap and errour, which your cruell selfe  
Against your selfe call crime; *Ioue* would not hold  
His vengefull thunder, if he iudg'd it so.  
The age were good, were men as penitent



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

For true and reall faults, as you for that,  
Which ignorance hath wrought, and was the crime  
Of fate it selfe, not yours: you could not thinke  
That *Theban Laius* and *Iocasta* were  
Your happlesse parents; and too great a feare  
Of being guilty, made you what you fear'd.  
Remembring what the oracle foretold,  
You lest a Kingdomes glory, and forsooke  
Good *Polybus* and loving *Merope*,  
Your then supposed parents, and betooke  
Your selfe vnto a willing banishment.  
What more then this could you haue done? to keepe  
Your goodnesse, you forsooke a crowne, which others  
Striue to attaine by all impiety.  
Yet cruell fate pursu'd you still, and made  
Your vertuous minde the way to your offence;  
As if the Gods themselues had punish'd you  
For striving to be innocent, when they  
Had fore decree'd your guilt, take comfort Sir,  
No man offends, but where the will consents.

*Oed.* How well canst thou, *Antigone*, that bear'st,  
A Magazen of vertuous thoughts within thee,  
Speake words of comfort, but accursed I  
Am most vncapable, there's nought in me,  
But horreur, greife, despaire and misery.  
Shew me some way of death, or let me goe.

*Anti.* I cannot leaue you Sir, nor shew your death,  
But where I meane to beare you company.

*Oed.* I neuer should haue had a vertuous childe  
But to afflict me more; nature will worke

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

A miracle to make my sufferings greater.  
The Sunne shall bring blacke night, the Euening starre  
Vther the day, and seas shall meete the sky  
To make addition to my misery:

*Anti.* good Sir, goe take some rest; doe not destroy  
That life, on which another life depends. (power

*Oed.* There's none but thou, has a commanding  
Ore *Oedipus*, if thou command me leape  
Into *Sicilian Aetna's* scalding throat,  
I'll gladly doo't; if thou wilt haue it so  
I will, like *Titius*, with my liuer feede  
A tiring vultur; more, I will take rest;  
Nay, most of all, Ile liue at thy request.

*Anti.* I see some signes of rest vpon him now. *Exeunt.*

### *Scena secunda. Aemon.*

*Aemon.* How well this sad and solitary place  
Suites with my thoughts? these vnfrequented woods,  
Where nature voide of artificall robes  
Presents her naked and vngarnish'd face.  
In such abodes as these dwelt piety,  
White innocence, and spotlesse chastity  
In that first golden age when *Saturne* reign'd.  
And still me thinkes within these woods he reignes,  
Though banish'd quite from all the world beside.  
Here liues the soule of vertue; here abides  
The faire *Antigone*, whose matchlesse goodnesse  
Vpbraides, and expiates this ages crimes,  
And quite out-weighs th' impiety of *Thebes*,

This



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

This place the Gods, disdaining other sights,  
Behold with wonder, when *Antigone*  
With pious hands directs her blinded fire  
The wofull *Oedipus*; hither the Graces,  
The chaster Nymphs, and harmelesse *Dryades*  
Leauing their bowers of pleasure, all resort  
To waite on her, and beare her company.

*Antigone, Aemon.*

*Anti.* My father is asleepe; you powers aboue  
Send sweete refreshment to his wearyed soule.  
Oh pity him, and punish not too farre  
That crime which fate and you your selues haue made.  
He has already beene himselve a iudge  
Too cruell to himselve, to expiate  
His farall errours, lest a crowne and scepter,  
Fled mens sociery, and day it selfe,  
Torne out his innocent vnhappy eyes.  
Now since he wants the comfort of your light  
Grant him a quiet vndisturbed night.  
Young *Aemon* heere?

*Aem.* Pardon me royall virgin,  
Thinke it not rudenesse in me thus to presse  
Vpon your priuacyes; but call it seruice,  
Or zeale to wait vpon you, and behold  
What I doo most admire.

*Anti.* Sir, tis no fault  
That I can apprehend; or if it bee,  
Tis such a fault as punishes it selfe.

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

This is the house of sorrow ; nought is heere  
That can inuite or recompense your comming.

*Aem.* To visite you, so you be pleas'd to grace  
That visite with a welcome, is a blessing  
No place has power to lessen, it would make  
Hells saddest caue a faire *Elysium*. (taught you.

*Anti.* You come from Court, and speake as that has  
This place knowes no such language.

*Aem.* *Aemon* neuer  
Was tax'd of flattery, nor will your worth  
Admit it; gentle Lady, be but pleas'd  
To thinke my heart speakes, in my tongue to you.  
Oh giue me leaue but to confesse my flame,  
Which neuer can be hid ; a better fire  
More chaste, more true, and full of constancy,  
( I dare maintaine it ) warmes no breast on earth.  
No earthly power but sweete *Antigone*  
Can sentence me to blisse or endlesse woe.  
Oh saue that creature that depends on you,  
Make me immortall by a faire returne  
Of grace from you and fauour.

*Anti.* Noble *Aemon*,  
( That title, though I hated you, your worth  
Would challenge from my truth ) I loue you better  
Then so to worke your ruine ; Loue and wed-locke  
Haue still beene fatall in our family.  
The balefull owles and croaking rauens sing  
Our *Hymenean* songs, and furies light  
Their brands for torches to our bridall bedds. (you,

*Aem.* No, wondrous maide, you beare a heauen about

A



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

A heauen of vertue, that is prooffe againſt  
The furies rage, and fortunes vtmoſt ſpite:  
You are aboue them all. Oh take me to you,  
And by coniunction of your goodneſſe, make  
Me higher then the power of fate can reach.

*Anti.* Theſe are no times for *Hymen*, when the frowne  
Of all the gods lyes heauy on our houſe.  
Oh moue that ſuite no more; but yet as farre  
As my chaſt ſorrow can admit of loue,  
Let this ſuffice you, I do loue your ſoule.  
And if this ſtorme ſhould cleare, and I haue power  
To marry euer, *Aemon* is the man  
Of all the world I chooſe.

*Aem.* Oh heauenly voyce!  
This promiſe from diuine *Antigone*,  
More then fruition of the proudeſt beauty  
That ere mortality could boaſt, reuiues me,  
And makes me euer happy; all the howers,  
That from my countreys cauſe, and from the warre  
I can be ſpar'd, Ile keepe as holy ones  
To pay deuotion heere, heere Ile relate  
What euer fortune throwes on doubting *Thebes*.  
But one chaſt kiſſe and ſo farewell.

*Anti.* You haue it.  
Yee powers of loue, bee all auſpicious now.  
*Hymen* redeeme the wrongs that thou haſt done  
Our houſe already; had I neuer ſeene  
Young *Aemon's* face, nere knowne his matchleſſe worth,  
No other man or minde had ere had power  
To warme *Antigones* cold breaſt with loue.

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

prosper that flame that you your selues did mooue.

*Dirceus, Ianthus.*

*Dir* : Tis so, *Ianthus*, *Aemon* is in loue  
With faire *Antigone*; no other passion  
Could make so fresh a youth and spirit as his  
To seeke such sad retreats; from that darke groue,  
Which cloaths *Cytherens* rough and craggy top,  
Where farre from sight and company of men  
The wofull *Oedipus* laments alone  
His happlesse errors fault, vnscene by any  
But good *Antigone* his pious daughter,  
How oft of late braue *Aemon* has beene mett!  
What but her loue had power to draw him thither?

*Ian*. Shee is an obiect worthy *Aemon's* loue.  
The mirrour of her sexe, a lasting patterne  
Of piety to all succeeding times.

*Dir*. As much true worth and manly vertue liues  
In noble *Aemons* breast, hee's the true brother  
Of braue *Menaceus*, whose deuoted head  
Sau'd *Thebes* from ruine.

*Ian*. True, if *Thebes* be safe,  
As neuer fairer were her hopes then now;  
Th' Argolian forces are dishearten'd quite,  
And of their seuen proud leaders, which of late  
Belet the gates of *Thebes*, but two are left  
Onely *Adrastus*, and our banish'd prince.  
If we, I say, be safe, we owe that safety  
To *Creons* sonnes, to braue *Menaceus* death,  
And *Aemon's* liuing valour; one by death

Gaue



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Gave life to thousands; & others noble life  
Deser'd an easier way to fame then death.

*Dir.* But I haue heard newes from the enemies campe,  
Alls quiet there, and tis suppos'd they meane  
To fight no more, but secretly dislodge,  
And fly away by night.

*Ian.* Tis like enough,  
And would the King be rul'd by my aduice  
Hee should not follow them, there has beene spilt  
Already blood enough in that vniust,  
Vnnaturall cause. Those braue Argolians,  
Whose vertues wee, although their enemies,  
Must needs acknowledge, and lament their deaths,  
Besides those dearer funeralls, which *Thebes*  
Has mourn'd already for, to iustifie  
The broken faith of King *Eteocles*.  
But who's that makes to vs so speedily,  
Thy lookes speak newes, what are they man? be brieue.

*Nuntius, Dirceus, Ianthus.*

*Nun.* The King was walking round the city walls,  
When straight a parley sounded from the foe,  
And *Polynices* our exiled Prince  
Himselfe appear'd, who from below complain'd  
So many noble funeralls had pay'd  
The forfeit of his brothers periury;  
Defi'd him then, and challeng'd him alone  
To end the difference in a single combate.

*Dir.* Oh horrid monstrous challenge?

*Ian.*

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

*Ian.* Has the King  
Accepted it? *Nun.* Yes, with a seeming ioy,  
And did complaine alone that he himfelfe  
Was not the challenger. *Dir.* Vnnaturall!

*Nun.* Though many that were by, perfwaded him  
He neede not answer it at all; his strength  
Was great enough to keepe the crowne without it.

*Ian.* But piety how euer should forbid it.

*Nun.* It did not mooue his breast; thou shalt (quoth he)  
Immediately at head of all our troopes  
Finde vs prepar'd to answer, and to take  
Mistake away, wee'll weare our royall crowne:  
It grieues vs onely t'was thy motion first.  
And one of vs, when this blacke fight is done,  
Shall without riuall keepe the *Theban* crowne.

*Ian.* Come *Dircus*, let's away, and or preuent,  
Or see the issue of this dire intent. *Exeunt.*

### *Chorus Thebanorum.*

*Cho.* Can *Thebes* yet finde no peace, nor see  
A period of her misery?  
What bootéd braue *Menæus* death,  
Who gaue vp his deuotéd breath  
To saue his Countrey? what the falls  
Of all those worthyés, whom the walls  
Of our sad *Thebes* late trembled at?  
Bold *Capaneus*, whose strange fate  
No human strength, but from aboue  
The thunderbolts of armed *Ioue*

Could



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Could worke ; the stout *Hippomedon*,  
And *Meleager's* beautilous sonne ;  
*Apollo's* sacred Prophet too.  
Quicke to *Aueruus* forc'd to goe  
*Amphiarau*, to preuent  
The fates, by his so strange descent  
Frighting the Ghosts that dwell below.  
Nor could the fatall sisters know,  
Before they saw him 'mong't the dead;  
That they should cut his vitall thread.  
These, and a thousand worthyes more  
Are fled downe to the shades below,  
And yet the wicked part of warre  
Doth still remaine ; the Princes are  
Both yet aliue, and yet doe hate.  
What end can be compos'd by fate ?  
Their hate is impious, but to try  
The cause, were more impiety.  
Our teares doe still encrease, the skyes  
Are fill'd with nought but prodigyes  
Which woes and ruines doe display.  
I long to heare what fate to day  
The field affords; relate to vs  
How blacke so ere and ominous.

*Nuntius, Chorus.*

*Nun.* Then heare a story that might make  
Amazed natures selfe to shake  
The Princes both are slaine ( alas ).

*Cho.*

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

*Cho.* What guilty hands could act such tragedyes?

*Nun.* Nay there's the sorrow of it, and a griefe  
Worse then their death's are, in a single combate  
They slew each other. *Cho.* Oh blacke family?  
But yet relate the manner of their death.

*Nun.* When this great warre of one diuided wombe,  
Two brothers mett, both armies stood at gaze,  
Amazed both; the greiued gods of warre,  
Withdrew their presence from so blacke a fight.  
*Bellona* broke her lance, the blew-ey'd maide  
Fled from the field asham'd, and *Mars* drone backe  
His *Thracian* charriot; in whose stead the furies  
Marshall'd the field, and all th' *Ogygian* ghosts  
In a blacke ring beset the combatants  
Blasting the day with dampes of *Acheron*.  
No Trumpets sounded, nor shrill cornets peirc'd  
The wounded aire; for these the nights sad King  
Thrice thunder'd from *Auernus*; thrice the Earth  
with mournfull grones gaue signall to the fight.  
Old men complain'd that they had liu'd too long.  
To see that horrid sight; the women shreik'd,  
And weeping mothers from the walls forbad  
Their children to behold it, but the Princes  
With such a furious hatred both encounter  
As if the soules of all their slaughter'd friends,  
And both the armyes, whom their cause engag'd,  
Had liu'd in them, till fate so cruelly  
Ballanc'd their strength, that both were slaine, yet both  
were guilty conquerours. *Cho.* But did they dy  
Together then. *Nun:* *Eteocles* fell first;

Ore



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Ore whom, before death closed vp his eyes,  
Bloodlesse and feeble *Polynices* stood,  
And from his head taking th' imperiall crowne  
Empal'd himselfe therewith ; at last ( quoth hee )  
Thou art mine owne. oh doe not close his eyes  
Pale death, till he haue seene me weare the Crowne.  
But I must leaue it too ; Oh short short raigne.  
If there be iustice in the other world,  
Before great *Minos* vrne, it *Minos* vrne  
Be not a fable, will I summon thee,  
Nor shall this combate end our enmity.  
Then on his brother falling downe he dy'd.

*Cor.* Oh horrid fight ! bright *Phabus* hide thy head,  
Wrap vp the day in foggy clouds, and make  
An endlesse night, to hide this tragedy  
From human eyes ; a blacker deed then this  
Thy light did nere discouer, here let all  
The prodigyes that threaten'd vs, haue end.

*Nun.* The *Argines* all with winged speede are fled,  
And *Thebes* once more has peace ; but that, I feare ( now )  
Long cannot last. *Chor.* What storme can threaten

*Nun.* *Creon* no sooner was saluted King  
( For so hee was since both those Princes fell )  
But he commanded ( Oh fond tyranny )  
No man on paine of death should dare to bury  
One body of the *Argines*, they ( alas )  
Remaine exposed in the open field  
To feede the foules, or perish in the aire.  
Nor must the *Argines* only want the rites  
Of funerall ; but *Theban Polynices*

Because

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Because with them he fought against his countrey,  
Remaines exposed as the *Argives* are  
In th' open aire, who ere shall bury him,  
His owne dead carcasſe ſhall ſupply the place.

*Cho.* *Thebes* will, I feare, incurre the enmity  
Of nations by this act, and we ſhall wiſh  
(If *Creon* ſo begin his froward reigne)  
Th' vnhappy houſe of *Oedipus* againe.

*Finis actus primus*

## Actus Secundus.

*Ornitus, Argia, Deiphile.*

*Arg.* **W**here ſhall we vent our griefes? what power  
(on earth  
Can lend our woes redreſſe?

*Deiph.* Accurſed *Thebes*,  
Iſt not enough thy guilty ſoile hath drunke  
So many princes bloods, but after death  
Vnto their Ghoſts thou ſtill ſhouldeſt prooue a foe,  
And barre what nature, and all lawes beſtow?

*Ar.* Whither is goodneſſe fled from humane breſts?  
Tygers themſelues, if tygers could performe  
Theſe rites of funeralls, would now correct  
The malice of mankind.

*Arg.* What ſhall we doe  
T' appeaſe the ghoſts of our vnbury'd Lords? (teares  
*Deiph.* Goe ſue to *Thebes*, perchance the ſighs, and  
Of



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Of weeping queenes may mooue the tyrants heart:

*Or.* No, royall Ladies, banish from your breasts  
That flattering hope; no teares, nor prayers can mooue,  
The ruthlesse tyrants minde; an impious oath  
Hath bound his cruelty; his watchmen tell  
The carcasses, and guard the place, to keepe  
Sad friends from thence: no creatures haue accesse  
To that dire field, but beasts, and birds of prey.  
His hate is constant, sooner hope t'appease  
*Busiris* altars, or the fiends themselues,  
Then sauage *Creon*; venture not to *Thebes*.

*Dei.* What other course is left vs? *Orn.* To performe  
To their deare names such empty funeralls  
As fortune will allow; or if that that  
Will not suffice, goe speedily to *Athens*;  
Thither all conquering *Theseus* is return'd,  
Triumphant now from th' *Amazonian* warre,  
Whose mighty arme all sauadge tyrants dread,  
Whose high Heroike thoughts were ne're auerse  
From suppliants, and for encouragement  
To all that come, in midd' st of *Athens* stands  
A gracious altar, where white mercy dwells,  
The poore mans goddesse, shaded with a groue  
Of suppliant Oliues, and chaste Laurell trees.  
None are deny'd to enter, but the rich,  
And fortunate; poore wretches, night and day,  
Find free accesse, and there haue leaue to pay  
Their cheape deuotion; no flaine bullocks blood,  
No Frankincense, nor rich *Arabian* fumes  
Do feede that altar: sighs, and floods of teares

Are

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Are all that goddesse craues ; no gold adorne  
Her humble roofes, as those proud temples rais'd  
By happy Monarchs, and great conquerers,  
Instead of trophées, and triumphall robes,  
Torne haire, and widowes mourning garments hang  
About the temple, thither from all coasts  
Vnhappy soules repaire, sad folke subdu'd  
In warre, or banish'd from their native soiles,  
Or those, whom happlesse error has made guilty.  
There they implore, and there obtaine their peace.

*Arg.* Goe you to *Athens*, sister, and intreat  
Great *Theseus* aide, whilest I, whose fatall quarrell  
Was cause of all this dire and mournfull warre,  
Will try what mercy can be found in *Thebes*.

*Deiph.* Do not expose your life to such an hazard.

*Arg.* What mischeife can an humble suppliant feare?  
Besides my suite to *Creon* will in *Thebes*  
Be seconded by *Polynices* friends.  
Goe you with speed to *Athens*, if I faile,  
That your petition timely may preuaile.  
And all the gods prosper your pious suite.

*Arg.* May *Thebes* prooue gentle when *Argia* enters.

*Exeunt. Manet Argia, Menetes.*

*Arg.* Now I am free to act what I designe.  
Shall I expect the doubtfull grant of *Creon*,  
Or *Theseus* lingringe aide, whilest thou, deare Lord,  
Art foode for Vulturs ? whilst thy funerall  
Decreases daily, and thy wandering Ghost

Perchance



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Perchance complaining to th' infernall gods  
Cal'st me vnrinde, and cruell? I will lose  
No longer time, no danger shall withstand  
That act, which loue, and my chaste fires command.

*Exit.*

*Creon, Eurydice, Ianthus, Ephytus.*

*Cre.* Moue me no more in that, can *Amon* finde  
No match 'mongst all the noble *Theban* Maides,  
Nor forreigne Princes, but *Antigone*?  
To mixe the fortune of our house with that  
Incestuous, dire, and fatall family?  
Moue me no more I say.

*Eury.* but good, my Lord,  
Weigh not alone her haplesse parentage,  
(Though that were royall, and ally'd to you  
In neere degrees) but her admired vertue,  
In which the generall voyce of people speakes her  
As much excellling, as the worst of all  
Her wretched race were infamous for vice.

*Cre.* What reall vertue euer could proceede  
From such an impious stock? or being borne,  
Could euer prosper?

*Eury.* Doe not taxe so farre  
The iustice of the gods, that they should punish  
In good *Antigone* her kindreds crimes:  
They haue already with dire punishments  
Pay'd for their proper guilt; and her rare vertues  
By the same law may challenge, as a due,  
The greatest blessings that the gods can grant.

C

*Cre.*

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

*Cre.* No act of hers can recompence the guilt,  
Her birth alone has brought into the world,  
And now we'll purge the city, *Aphytus*,  
Goe finde out *Oedipus*, and in our name  
Confine him to *Cytheron*; speake it death,  
If ere he shew within the walls of *Thebes*  
His ominous head.

*Aph.* That banishment, my liege,  
Is come too late, hee is confin'd already  
Vnto his latest home, grieve for his sonnes  
Has broke at last his great and stubborn heart.

*Ian.* The queene *Iocasta* hearing that sad newes  
Beating her breast, tearing her hoary haire,  
And uttering sad complaints against the gods,  
And fates severe decrees, at last espy'd  
That fatall sword by which old *Laius* dy'd  
On which she fell, and ended her sad life.

*Cre.* We have no teares for her, although our sister;  
Let all the plagues, that *Thebes* so long has felt,  
Take end with them. None but *Antigone*  
Is now remaining of that family.

Goe thou, *Ianthus*, in our name command her  
To keepe her house in *Thebes*, nor stirre from thence,  
Vntill our farther pleasure shall be knowne. *Exit Ians.*

*Eury.* Be good to her, my Lord, for *Aemon*s sake.  
What ere mishap befall *Antigone*  
Hee'll deeply share in, for I feare his loue  
Is too too constant ere to be remoou'd.  
Rather then loose him, grant his lawfull suite.

*Cre.* Ile rather grant him death then marriage there.

*Eur.*



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

*Eur.* Remember hee's our sonne, our only sonne,  
And vertuous too, of whom the Kingdome boasts.  
Blast not their hopes in him, the fate of loue  
Is irresistable.

*Cre.* Let *Amon* know  
Wee'll be his fate. No more *Eurydice*.

*Ianthus, Creon, Eurydice.*

*Ian.* *Antigone* was lately met alone  
Without the city. None of all her seruants  
Were priuy to her going, nor yet know  
Whither their Lady went. *Cre.* Ha! I suspect  
What she intends to doe. If I guesse right  
She goes vpon her ruine. *Ephytus*,  
Double the watch, and with a carefull eye  
Ore looke the knaues; this night shall be thy charge.  
Performe it well, and thou shalt finde reward  
Beyond thy wishes; let no negligence,  
No gifts, no fauour, nor respect to any,  
How neere so ere to vs, make thee or them  
Slacke in your charges, as your liues shall answer  
Our strictest iustice. *Eph.* Doe not feare me Sir.  
*Cre.* Ile be at hand my selfe to make all sure. *Exeunt.*

*Antigone sola:*

(night,  
*Ant.* Poast to the West, bright *Phabus*, and thou  
That robb'st mortality of light, to lend them

## *The Tragedy of Antigone*

A greater blessing, rest and sweet repose,  
Spread thy black mantle ore yon mourning fields,  
Which those dead Grecians strew, where too too long  
My wronged brother *Polynices* lyes  
Barr'd by vnnaturall, and iniurious *Thebes*,  
Dead from a tombe, as liuing from a Crowne.  
This wrong must I redresse, assist me vertue,  
And all yee gods, that fauour piety.  
I haue at last escapt the curious eyes  
Of all that watcht my actions, and expect  
Nought but the safe concealement of the night :  
Were but these rites perform'd, not *Creons* spite,  
Nor racks, nor tortures should my soule affright,

### *Chorus Thebanorum.*

I What could th'Argolian ghosts, though once our  
Deserue so much from vs, as thus to lose (foes,  
The rites of funerall, which all mankinde  
Iustly expect from greatest foes to finde?  
Why should the land that gaue them death, deny  
Them sepulture? pursuing enmity  
Farther then that? why with so black a staine  
Dost thou pollute the entrance of thy reigne  
Vnhappy *Creon*, thwarting natures law,  
Vpon thy selte and fatall *Thebes* to draw  
The hate and curse of nations, who will make  
The quarrell theirs; *Pluto* himselfe will take  
Reuenge for this great losse, that must befall  
His Monarchy, whilst these Argolians all

Vnburied



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Vnburied lie, wandring a hundred yeare  
Exil'd from him for want of sepulcher.

2 Thine anger bootes not *Creon*; tis all one  
Whether the fire or putrefaction  
Dissolue them; all to natures bosome goe,  
And to themselves their ends the bodies owe.  
If now the Argiues bodies be not burn'd,  
They shall when earth and seas to flames are turn'd.  
Earth will, inspite of thee, receiue againe  
What euer she brought forth; and they obtaine  
Heauens couerture, that haue no graues at all.  
Thou that deny'st these people funerall,  
Why dost thou fly those slaughter-smelling fields?  
Breathe, if thou canst, the aire this sad place yeelds.  
Those vanquish'd carcasses alone possesse  
The ground, and barre the conquerours accesse.

3 When that annoyance shall be vanish'd quite,  
The wandring ghosts will still remaine, and fright  
The balefull place; plowmen shall feare to toyle  
In furrowes of this ill-manured soyle.  
This ghostly land of ours perchance shall be  
Tane for *Avernius* by posterity,  
And claim'd by *Pluto* as his monarchy,  
Where thousand wandring soules together fly.  
Cleare *Dirce* shall be made the Poets theame,  
Instead of muddy *Styx*, whose fatall streame  
The ghosts so strue to be transported ore  
By churlish *Charon* to *Elysiums* shore:  
And rather then so great an host should seeme  
Exil'd from thence, it will be thought by them

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Another *Acheron* shall heere be made,  
And they possesse their owne *Elysian* shade.

1. What shall we doe to cure this fatall staine  
Vpon our nation? 2. Nothing but complaine.

Actus Tertius.

*Æmon.*

**M**Y feares haue brought me early to this place.  
The night is young; No watches yet are set.  
How sad and deepe a silence does possesse (strange?  
These mourning fields! but why should that seeme  
Why shake I thus? Why do my coward thoughts  
Tell me tis ominous? is it not night?  
And who dares tread on this forbidden ground?  
The Rauens, Wolues, and Vulturs heere haue fill'd  
Their hungry mawes, and now are gone to rest.  
What noise should I expect, vnlesse the Ghosts  
Of these dead *Greekes* with querulous cryes should fill  
The aire of night? what horroure thus inuades me?  
Is it because the *Schreick* owle cry'd about me  
Passing the gates of *Thebes*? because to night  
I haue so often stumbled on dead men?  
Tut; these are toyes for children, let not feare,  
That euer was a stranger to this breast,  
Reigne in it now. But tis *Antigone*,

Whom



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Whom cruell vertue will command to night  
Into a world of danger, is the cause  
Of all my feare. Oh faire *Antigone*,  
Why art thou good? so excellently good,  
To make me more then wretched? you bright starres,  
That doe alternallie with *Phœbus* rule  
And measure time, if vertue be a kinne  
To heauen and you, if your faire influence  
Gouerne this lower world, let not the night,  
Which is your time of reigne, giue priuiledge  
To murders, witchcrafts, and infernall arts,  
Whilest vertue suffers, and white innocence  
Is made a prey. Ile watch the field to night;  
But not be seene, till time require mine aide.  
Secretly shrowded in yon *Cypresse* groue  
Ile watch what fortunes doe attend my loue. *Exit.*

*Menetes, Argia.*

*Men.* Madam, the place is neere; the noisome aire,  
Which those vnburied carcasses exhale,  
Growes stronger still, and from that feeble shine,  
Which to the night halfe-clouded *Cynthia* lends,  
How large a shade the lofty *Theban* walls  
Spread ore this field of death! those twinckling lights,  
Which we from hence discern, burne in the tower  
Of *Creon's* cruell watch.

*Arg.* Oh *Thebes*, a name  
Once deare to me, but now a word of horreur,  
And endlesse sorrow! yet giue leaue t'enterre

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

My husbands hearse, and I will loue thee still,  
And leaue my heart for euermore to dwell  
On thy deare ground, behold with what attendance,  
What state the great *Adrastus* daughter comes  
To claime her right at *Thebes*; how poore a claime  
The wronged wife of *Polynices* makes.  
Tis not thy wealth, nor *Cadmus* stately throne,  
Nor crowne, nor septer that *Argia* claimes.  
I craue but mourning free, but death and dust,  
And such abhorred dust, as thou disdainst  
To harbour louingly, bestow but what  
Thou hast on me, and take the greatest thanks  
A queene can giue; and thou beloued ghost  
Of my dead Lord, if through these fields thou wander,  
And loue the rites that I performe to night,  
Direct me where thy wronged body lyes.

*Men.* Madam this way, nearer the city walls  
My Lord was slaine, & there perchance he lyes. *Exeunt.*

*Dirceus with a Torch.*

*Dir.* Prince *Amon* is abroad, and woe is me  
Gone with too great a confidence I leare  
Vpon my plot, which is defeated quite.  
The watch is doubled, and more strictly kept  
Then heretofore, no possibility  
To lay them all asleepe, what he intended  
To worke vpon it, is quite frustrate now.  
Oh could I meete him but to let him know  
What has befall'n. He range these fields to find him. *Exit.*

*Monates*



# *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

*Menetes and Argia with the dead body.*

*Arg.* Was this the sight was promis'd me at *Thebes*?  
Are these the triumphs of my dearest Lord?  
Thus to thy native country dost thou bid  
*Argia* welcome? thus dost thou requite.  
The entertainment, that kind *Argos* gaue  
To thee a stranger? why prepar'st thou not  
The *Theban* palace to receiue thy queene?  
But why complaine I vainely? thou alas  
Art held a stranger to thy native *Thebes*,  
Nay more, a foe, to whom the cruell ground  
Denyes that common bounty, which in death  
The meanest creatures challenge at her hand.  
But woe is me, t'was I that caus'd thy fall,  
T'was I that mou'd my father to this warre,  
And all those *Gracian* Princes; happy else  
Mightst thou haue liu'd at *Argos* still with me,  
And ne're set foote on this accursed ground.  
Did I for this entreat those valiant *Greekes*  
To warre with *Thebes*, to see my dearest Lord  
Thus all deform'd with gore, trod downe in dust,  
And couer'd ore with filth? *Men.* See, Madam, see  
The mortall wound yet gaping on his breast.

*Arg.* Was this a brothers hand? but in that name  
I finde thy guilt as much; Ile rather thinke  
Thou nere hadd'st any kindred, neuer brother,  
Nor other name of blood, which nature meant  
A name of loue. For where are all their teares?

where

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Where is their sorrow now ? if not in *Thebes*  
Where hast thou kindred ? none laments but I,  
To me alone is *Polynices* dead.  
Where is thy mother, and thy sisters now ?  
Where is that good *Antigone*, so fam'd  
For piety, whom thou so oft would'st praise,  
And tell such pleasing stories of her vertue ?

### *Antigone with a Torch.*

*Ant.* About this place he lyes, deare Ghost forgiue  
Thy Sisters slacknesse, and with fauour now  
Accept these louing, though late rites I doe.  
A *Gracian* Lady ? (so her habit speakes her )  
Some pious sorrow brings her to this place:  
Lady the gods assist your piety.

*Arg.* Are you a wofull widow'd Lady too,  
That come to breake dire *Creons* sauage law?  
But yet you seeme a *Theban* ; all their bodyes  
Haue rites of funerall perform'd already:  
Or does your too too charitable grieve?  
Extend to some vnhappy *Gracian* soule ?

*Anti.* I know not how to answer you ; the man  
Whose hearse I seeke, was once a *Theban* prince;  
But since his native soile did proue to him  
So cruell, and vnnaturall, I dare  
Not call him *Theban*. Gentle *Argos* prou'd  
A kinder home to him, and freely gaue  
What *Thebes*, though due, deny'd, a princely state  
With royall nuptials ; now among the soules

Of



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Of those vnbury'd *Gracians* wanders he,  
And still perhaps desires to bee esteem'd  
One of their company, hating for euer  
( Ah woe is me ) the memory of *Thebes*.  
His name was *Polynices*, my vnhappy,  
Though dearest brother. *Arg*. Oh my heart! are you  
That good *Antigone*, whom I so long  
Haue wish'd to see?

*Ant*. I am that wofull maide.

*Arg*. Then see your brother my deare husbands hearse  
Your griefe is mine. *Ant*. Pardon me royall sister,  
Are you *Argia* great *Adrastus* daughter?  
Let me adore the best of woman kinde.  
Has your most faithfull vnexampled loue  
Brought you so farre, and on so cruell hazards  
To my dead brother? was it not enough  
That first so great a princeesse as your selfe  
Aduanc'd a banish'd man, and freely gaue  
That loue to him, which happyest princes sought?  
But that his dire misfortunes euermore  
Should make your vertue wretched?

*Arg*. Dearest sister,  
Whose knowledge I am proud, though thus, to meete,  
By this true knot of euerlasting loue  
Our sorrow eyes to night, I here protest,  
No griefe, no losse that banishment could bring  
Did moue so much sad *Polynices* heart,  
As parting from thy dearest company.  
No name to him was halfe so deare in *Thebes*,  
No name so often as *Antigone*

Would

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Would his sad tongue to me alone repeate.

*Antigo.* And witnesse all yee sacred deities,  
Though *Polynices* from his native *Thebes*  
Were banish'd long, yet from a sisters heart  
The loue of thee could neuer be exil'd,  
Nor *Thebes* without thy presence pleasing to me.  
How oft haue I vpon *Cytherons* mount  
Appeal'd my fathers anger toward thee?  
And dost thou thus visite thy sister heere?  
Oh my wrong'd brother? *Arg.* Oh my dearest Lord!  
When first at *Argos* I beheld thy face,  
It was deform'd with blood, and wounded then,  
Yet then I lou'd it; fortune to my loue  
Shew'd thee at first a pityed spectacle  
As now at last, dearest *Antigone*;  
My brother *Tydeus* met him then at *Argos*,  
Both strangers there, before affinity  
Had made them brothers, in a mutuall rage  
They fought; but all the blood that then was drawne  
Seem'd but a sacrament, that did confirme  
Their after rare and vnexampled loue.

*Ants.* Ay me, how different was it from the loue  
Which heere a naturall brother shew'd to him!  
*Argos,* how farre dost thou disgrace our *Thebes*  
In nature and in honour! *Mena.* Royall Ladyes,  
The night growes old, and danger threatens vs.  
Be speedy now: these obsequies perform'd,  
You may with more security enioy  
Each others mutuall loue, and then discourse  
Of *Thebes*, and *Argos*; danger, and the time

Will



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Will not permit it now ; not farre from hence  
Are many fragments left of funerall fire,  
Where *Thebans* haue beene burn'd ; those let vs vse,  
And then retire from this vnhappy place.

*Æphytus with the watch.*

(the place

*Æph.* VWhere didst thou see those lights? I. About  
VWhere *Polynices* body lyes. *Æph.* If any  
Haue there perform'd forbidden obsequies,  
They cannot farre escape ; pursue with speede ;  
Spare none ; you know your oath, and penalty.

*Æmon, and Dirceus.*

*Æm.* The watch is vp, and with a winged speede  
Pursues those lights, which my presaging soule  
Tells me attend on faire *Antigone*.  
Should what I feare prooue true, they must not seize her,  
If all perswasions, promise of reward,  
Nor gold preuaile not, the deare cause will lend  
This arme a strength aboue mortality. *Exeunt.*

*Creon, Ianthus.*

*Cre.* The watch is diligent ; they doe not know  
That I am in the field. *Ian.* No'sure, my Lord.  
For your disguise is perfect, and no notice  
VWas giuen from me at all. *Cre.* VWhat things are these?

*Two*

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

*Two hagg s passe ouer the stage.*

*Ian.* Witches, my Lord, that come to exercise  
On these dead bodyes that bestrew the field  
Their damned arts ; here in the depth of night  
With incantations, and abused herbes  
They turne the dead's pale faces to enquire  
And heare the horrid oracles of death.  
Th' infernall gods ore master'd by their power,  
Or else perswaded by some piety  
Which pleases them, deny these witches nothing  
Which they request, the soules of those dead men  
Are forc'd t' obey their charmings, and returne  
Backe to their ancient prisons, to reueale  
To these dire hagg s the secrecies of fate  
And things to come. *Cre.* Ile follow them *Ianthus*,  
And know what fortunes shall attend my reigne.

*Ian.* Ah good my Lord vse not so bad away,  
You haue at hand, a nobler meanes to know  
The truth of all ; the old *Tiresias*  
Taught from the wisdom of the gods aboue,  
Who by a magike more diuine and pure  
Surueyes the course and influence of the starrs,  
And in that glorious booke reads the euent  
Of future things, rather repaire to him,  
Let him prepare a sacrifice, and aske  
The pleasure of the gods. *Cre.* Tut tut *Ianthus*,  
Astrolog' is vncertaine, and the gods  
In mystike riddles wrap their answers vp.

*But*



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

But he that dares with confidence to goe  
Enquire of deaths blacke oracles below  
In plainest terms the certaine truth shall know. *Exeunt*

### *2. Hags.*

1. We come too late, nor can this field  
To vs a speaking prophet yeild.  
The carcasses, whose cold dead tongues  
From whole, and yet vnperish'd lungs,  
Twixt hell and vs should hold commerce,  
And be the blacke interpreters  
Of Stygian counsells to relate  
The hid decrees of death and fate;  
Those carcasses I say are growne  
Corrupt, and rotten euery one,  
Their marrow's lost, their moistur's gone,  
Their Organs parched by the sunne,  
That there the Ghost drawne vp from hells  
Darke entrance, nought, but broken yells,  
And dismall hizzings can afford,  
Not one intelligible word.

2. But from this field of slaughter I  
Haue gather'd vp a treasury,  
As dead mens limms wet in the raine,  
Cold gelled tongues and parched braine,  
The slime that on blacke knuckles lyes,  
Shrunke sinnews, and congealed eyes,  
Bitt from their fingers nailes ore growne,  
And from young chinns pull'd springing downe.

*Fleth*

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Flesh bit by Wolues I tooke away,  
And robb'd the vultur of her prey.  
Where *Thebans* funerall pyles had made,  
I did the mourning fire inuade,  
And there blacke raggs with ashes fill'd,  
And coales on which their fat distill'd,  
I gather'd vp, and tooke from thence  
Halfe-burnt bones, and Frankincense,  
And snatch'd the fatal kindling brand  
From out the weeping parents hand.

1 Once more lett's trot the fields about  
To finde a fresher carcasle out.  
And speake a charme that may affright  
All pious loue from hence to night,  
Lest we by funerall rites do loose  
What *Creons* cruelty bestowes.

### *The 3 Haggewith a carcasle.*

3 By *Creons* trembling watch I bore  
This new slaine carcasle, but before  
I brought him thence, I grip'd him round:  
The filletts of his lungs are found.  
His vitalls all are strong and whole  
To entertaine the wretched soule,  
Whom forced furies must affright  
Backe from hell to vs to night.

*Enter Creon, Ianthus.*

*Cre.* You wise interpreters of fate, that looke

With



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

With iust contempt downe on that small allowance  
Of knowledge, which weake human breasts possesse.  
Whose subtle eyes can penetrate the depth  
Of darke *Aueruus* secrets, and from thence  
Enforce an answer from th' obeying fids.

Let me from your deepe skill be guided now

To know th' assurance of my future state:

It is a King that craues your aide, a King

Whose power has giu'n your art this furtherance,

By my command these carcasses haue lyen

Vnburied heere for you to practise on.

If *Creon* then deserue it at your hands,

Resolue me of my fate. 3. You haue your wish.

This carcasse shall relate it, do not feare

To heare him speake: what herbs haue you prepar'd?

I. I heere haue gather'd, all in one,

The poisonous gelly of the moone,

Mixt with sulphur of the night,

Libbards bane, and Aconite,

Dew gather'd, ere the morne arose,

From night-shade, henbane, Cypresse boughs.

'Mongst living creatures I haue sought,

And from each banefull brood haue brought

What ere could aide to our worke giue,

Skinns stript from horned snakes aliue,

The *Lynxes* bowells, blood of froggs,

The Schreichowles eggs, the foame of Doggs,

The wings of Batts, with Dragons eyes,

The Growes blacke head, the stone that lyes

In Eagles nests, and pebbles round,

D

That

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

That when the Ocean ebbs are found:

3. Enough; but I to adde to these so knowne  
And vulgar helps of our great art, haue gone,  
And found such simples, whose concealed aide  
No witch ere vs'd, or trembling god obey'd.  
*Theſſalians* valleys, *Colchos* famed shore,  
Nor *Libyan* squallid lands with *Gorgons* gore  
Bedew'd and sprinkled, nere produced iuice  
That could so much enthrall the deities.

When first I pluck'd them in yon gloomy vale  
The furies shreik'd, and *Hecate* grew pale,  
As loath to haue (in that abhorred ground)  
The power of simples, and their weakenesse found.

2. Then let vs now employ their powerfull helpe:  
What place doe we designe for our blacke worke?

1. There is within *Cerberus* hollow side  
A darke, and squallid caue, where day nere peep'd,  
Nor euer light, but light by magike made  
Shot through that dismall aire; pale mouldy filth  
Bred there by dreary night orespreds the place.  
The mouth of *Tanarus*, that balefull bound  
Twixt heauen and hell, appears not halfe so blacke.  
To this sad caue th' accustom'd fiends ascend,  
And thinke themselves still in their proper place.  
But Ghosts, that newly past *Aernus* lake,  
Shun the ascent, and though by vs inuok'd,  
Tremble to enter to that place vnknowne,  
And finde a hell more horrid then their owne.

2. Then thither let vs beare this carcasle hence.

3. No, no, we scorne the helps of that darke place;

Nor



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Nor is it honour to our art to finde,  
But make a darknesse fit to serue our ends.  
We that can force a Magike light to glide  
Through closest vaults, can force in spite of day  
A mist of night to rise, which all the rayes  
Of burning *Phæbus* shall want power to scatter.  
Oh would it were not night, but that the sunne  
Rode in his height of strength; how proudly then  
Might we performe our rites, and make it knowne,  
We vse not natures darknesse but our owne.

1. Lett's goe no further then ; this place shall serue.

3. Apply your ointments to the body, whilest I  
Prepare, and speake a charme shall quickly call  
Th' affrighted soule backe to his mansion.

*Cre.* My ioynts beginne to tremble, and I feare  
As much the meanes of knowledge, as th' euent  
Of what I came to know.

*Ian.* How full of blacke  
And balefull horror is this art of theirs?  
Would I were well from hence ; let me hereafter?  
Rather remaine in endlesse ignorance  
Then purchase knowledge by such meanes as these.

3. Sad King of night, whose balefull Monarchy  
The still repaired ruines of mankind  
Through euery age encrease; that greiu'st alone  
To see the heauenly gods for euer free  
From death's assaults, and thy subiection.  
Old formlesse *Chaos*, thou that would'st deface  
Natures whole beauty, quite disioint her fabrike,  
And swallow vp in darke confusion

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Ten thousand worlds ; thou squallid ferriman  
Of still *Auernus* ; thou three-headed porter ;  
You snake-hair'd sisters, punishers of guilt,  
As you would gaine our aid, or feare our threats,  
Whip back againe into this vpper world  
That new-fled soule, which did of late inhabite  
This pale and ghastly seate, but if in vaine  
On you I call, thou wretched wandering Ghost,  
Not yet transported ore the burning streame,  
But doom'd to exile for an hundred yeares,  
If true rewards can tempt thee, once againe  
Enter thy ancient prison, and in lieu  
Of that short pennance, I will make thee free  
(Releasing all thy tedious banishment)  
Of faire *Elisium* ; with such powerfull rites  
Ile giue thee buryall, as no Magicke spells,  
Nor incantations shall for euer call  
Thee backe, nor trouble thine eternall rest.  
Relate to *Creon* King of *Thebes* the fate  
That shall attend his reigne. *Ian.* The carkasse stirs.  
*Cre.* The face retaines pale death ; yet seemes to liue.

*The carcassee speakes.*

Thy death is neare ; yet ere thou dy  
A great and strange calamity  
Shall seize thy house, and thou in woe  
Shalt thinke the fatale sisters slow  
In giuing death, desiring then  
Thy reignes short date had shorter beene ;  
Yet thou at last in death shalt haue

(Though



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

( Though thou denid'st it vs ) a graue. *fals.*

*Cre.* Shame on your damned arts ; it does not ly  
Within the power of fate to worke this mischeife.

*Ian.* Beleeue it not, my Lord ; lett's quit the place,  
And from the wise *Tiresias* leeke aduise, *Exeunt.*

*Emon, Dircus.*

*Em.* *Dircus*, shee's gone, and I am worse then dead,  
Oh would the villaines armes had had the power  
To haue dispatch'd me quickly.

*Dir.* Good my Lord,  
Take fairer hopes, and liue ; cast not away  
The Kingdomes ioy ; what cruelty can touch  
So sweet a vertue as *Antigone* ?  
Retire with me into yon little house ;  
Ile there binde vp your wounds ; you bleede too fast,  
And needes must faint before you reach the walls.  
The wounds I tooke are scratches.

*Em.* Honest *Dircus*,  
What care can ere my body haue without  
The presence of my soule ? *Dir.* Delay not Sir.  
Their goodnesse will protect them : what other Lady  
Was that with her ? *Em.* It seemes it was *Argia*  
Dead *Polynices* wife, *Adrastus* daughter,  
Or else some grace or goddesse in that shape  
Came to comfort with good *Antigone*.

*Dir.* Wandering about the fields to finde out you,  
I met with witches, impious hagg, that came  
As I suppose, for execrable ends

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

There to abuse the bodies of the dead.  
Oh partiall fates, oh too iniurious night,  
Can these escape, when piety must suffer?

*Aem.* A faintnesse seizes me, I prithe *Dirces*  
Let me haue speedy newes.

*Dir.* You shall my Lord.  
When I haue drest you, Ile to court, and thence  
Bring you a true and swift intelligence.

*Exeunt:*

*Chorus Arginorum, Deiphile.*

*Cho.* By what new wayes of griefe shall we  
Our widow'd losses signifie?  
What strange expression can become  
A woe so strangely burdensome?  
No howles, no shreikes, no voice of woe,  
Not such as widow'd turtles shew,  
Nor such as *Philomel*, when shee  
High seated on a poplar tree,  
Sends sweet sad notes through th' aire of night,  
Wailing the husbandman's despite,  
That reau'd her of her dearest nest.  
Our losse cannot be so exprest.  
No, nor by actions, such as are  
The rending of disheuel'd haire,  
Or beating of our breasts; these all  
No more then death and funerall  
Can shew; but in our husbands we  
Receiue a greater iniury

*Then*



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Then death had done; the common rite  
Of funerall barr'd in despite.

*Deiph.* Cease widowes longer in that straine  
To waile, or 'gainst the fates complaine  
For funerall rites; but vnderstand  
Great *Theseus*, whose victorious hand  
In conquests neuer yet has faild,  
Is he, with whom we haue preuail'd  
For aide; and thinke what action  
He vndertakes, already done.  
He will reuenge on *Creon's* head  
The wrongs that we haue suffer'd.  
Our deare Lords Ghosts shall righted be.  
Then ioine your voyces all with me,  
And in triumphant songs let vs  
Renowne the noble *Theseus*.

*Cho.* *Theseus* is he, whose warrelike hand  
Defends mankinde in euerie land  
No lesse by tyrants fear'd and knowne  
Then was the faire *Alcmenaes* sonne.  
Twas he, whose iust reuenging Steele  
Subdu'd, and made dire *Schinis* feeble  
The selfe-same torture in his death  
By which he tooke from others breath,  
When trees together bowed were,  
And parted thence againe, did teare  
Poore wretches, but by *Theseus* he  
Was forc'd to tast that Tragedy.

*Deip.* *Procrustes* that inhuman thiefe  
(Monster of nature past beliefe)

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

That made all passengers, whom he  
Surpris'd within the woods, to bee  
By an vnheard of cruell sport,  
Stretch'd longer out, or else cut short,  
To fit their stature to his bed,  
By *Theseus* hand was conquered,  
And doomed then himselfe to dy  
By the same kinde of cruelty.

*Cho.* 'Twas he alone that did set free  
*Athens* from that sad slavery  
Which *Minos* fury, for the losse  
Of his belou'd *Androgeus*,  
Had brought them to, when w it hclew  
He scap'd the Labyrinth, and slew  
Feirce *Minotaurus*, that had beene  
The monstrous issue of the Queene  
*Pasiphaë*, Whom vnnaturall  
Prodigious lust had made to fall  
Before a Bull; the monster held  
Both shapes, and her foule guilt reueal'd.

*Deiph.* Against a farre worse monster now  
The noble *Theseus* armes to goe,  
Inhumane *Creon*, that denyes  
To worthiest soules due obsequyes,  
And, what those monsters would not doe,  
Does after death his hate pursue.

*Cho.* Oh let that still victorious sword  
Be now as prosperous, and afford  
To wicked *Creon* the iust meede  
That is deseru'd for such a deede.

But



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

But 'tis against all holy lawes  
To doubt successe in such a cause.

### Actus Quartus.

*Ephytus, Creon, Dirceus, Antigone, Argia.*

*Eph.* **P**Rince *Polynices* body is enterr'd  
By these two Ladyes, whom I apprehende  
Iust as the deepe was done; nor did themselves  
Deny the fact. *Cre.* One I suspected still,  
And I am glad I haue her, what's the other?

*Arg.* The wofull widow of that wronged Prince.  
Who stay'd behinde my countrey men, to doe  
Those rites, which loue, and piety requir'd  
To my dead Lord; if that be indg'd a crime  
Tis such a crime as I professe, and boast.

*Cre.* Are you *Adrastus* daughter then? *Arg.* The same.

*Cre.* You are our prisoner now, take her, *Ianthus*,  
Into your custody: this falls out fitly,  
The ransome of this Princessse will come well  
To fill our now-exhausted treasury.  
But thou a *Theban* borne, bound to obey  
Our crowne and lawes, what fury mou'd thy brea't  
(Disloyall maide) to scorne our edict so?

*Anti.* No other fury then the loue of vertue,  
And reuerence of the gods, mou'd me to this.  
Which wer't to doe againe, not all the power  
Of hell, and tyrants should affright me from it.

*Cre.*

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

*Cre.* Has guilt embolden'd thee ? is this th' excuse  
Thou mak'st to me ?

*Ant. Creon,* Let impious acts  
Seek for excuses ; I nor can, nor will  
So wronge the cause of heauen and piety,  
As once to pleade a fond excuse for that,  
Which is my merit, for that act I say  
Which by direction from the gods themselues  
I haue perform'd.

*Cre.* Is disobedience merit ?  
Or do the gods command subiects to breake  
The lawes of Princes ? *Ant.* Yes, their wicked lawes,  
Which thwart the will of heauen, the rule of nature,  
And those pure principles, which human breasts  
Did at their first originall deriue  
From that Celestiall essence : Such a law  
Was this which I haue broke, in giuing rites  
Of funerall to *Polynices* hearse,  
My dearest brother, this disobedience  
Thy seruants ( durst they speake ) would iustifie ;  
But forreine nations, and all future times  
In spite of tirants threatnings shall commend  
What I haue done, and though I dy for this  
Vniustly now, yet the infernall iudges,  
Whose sentence no mortality can scape,  
But must to all eternity sustaine,  
Shall from their iust vnpartiall vrnes bestow  
Endlesse rewards beyond my sufferings farre.

*Cre.* To those infernall iudges shalt thou goe,  
And thanke my charitable doome, that sends

Thy



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Thy soule to such great happinesse, if thou  
Esteeme it happinesse, and doe not feare  
What thou wouldst seeme to wish.

*Anti.* No, tyrant, no ;  
Death cannot proue a punishment to me,  
Whole life was nought but sorrow ; free'd from this  
Vnhappy world, in t'other I shall come  
Most wish'd, and welcome to my fathers sight,  
And that deare brother, for whose sake I dy.

*Creo.* Thou shalt be banish'd from the light of day,  
Nor then shalt thou immediately haue power  
To see that other world thou so desir'st.

*Ianthus,* till our farther pleasur's knowne

Guard safe *Argiaes* person ; *Aephytus* ;

See present execution done vpon

*Antigone* ; without the city walls

There is a new digg'd tombe, where neuer yet

Lay any funerall ; in that enclose

*Antigone* aliue, and barre it fast

As thou entend'st to liue, there let her pray

To those infernall gods shee so adores,

To keep her there, or take her quickly thence. *Exit Cre.*

*Dir.* Oh black accursed doome ; oh my sad fate,

That must report this newes to noble *Atmon*,

And with that breath destroy the best of men. *Exit Dir.*

*Argi.* Furies haue left their darke abodes, to dwell

In human shapes on earth ; there could not else

Liue such a monster, one so opposite

To heauen and goodnesse, as curs'd *Creon* is.

Ah dearest, dearest sister, did the fates

Differ

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Differre so long our wisht acquaintance heere  
To make vs meete so wretchedly at last ?

*Anti.* Weepe not deare sister ; your calamity  
Adds to my sufferings more: why were not all  
The miseries of *Cadmus* wofull house  
Confin'd within our selues, and bounded here  
In fatall *Thebes* ? why spread they so, to make  
The best of soules partaker ? happy else,  
And safe for euer had your vertue liu'd  
Admir'd in wealthy *Argos*, had you nere  
Nere knowne the sad affinity of *Thebes*.

*Arg.* Why did the tyrant thus diuide our sufferings?  
The tombe, where thou art clos'd, had beene to me  
More pleasing then a palace.

*Anti.* Heauen forefend ;  
May the iust gods hereafter recompence  
*Argiaes* vertue with a happier loue  
Then *Polymices* was, and happier friends  
Then *Thebes* can giue, doe not lament for me,  
Nor feare the torments of my lingring death.  
I am prouided of a remedy  
That shall delude the cruelty of *Creon*.  
Farewell my dearest *Emon*, whose lou'd presence  
More then the sight of day afflicts my soule  
To loose so soone, farewell where ere thou art,  
Till in the other world we meete againe. *Exeunt.*

*Emon.*

*Emm.* No newes of comfort, or discomfort yet ?  
Forgiue



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Forgiue me faithfull *Dirceus*, if my soule  
My loue-sicke soule vniustly doe accuse  
Thy diligent care, and thinke thee slacke ; my heart  
Till thy returne is stretch'd vpon the wracke,  
A racke of torturing thoughts, more painefull farre  
Then tyranny could wish, or foes inuent  
To punish foes, dost thou delay, because  
The newest thou bring'st is ill ? if my faire loue  
Be dead, or doom'd to death, why doo'st thou keepe  
My soule from her Celestiall company ?  
If all be well———but oh presumptuous soule  
Checke that too happy thought againe ; I know  
My fathers nature is vnmoouable  
In all resolues, and this bound by an oath  
So deepe, so solemne, and inuiolable  
As ere't be broke will breake this heart of mine :

*Enter Dirceus*

See here he comes, speake man, what newes ? Ay me,  
Thy very lookes haue blasted me before  
Thy tongue can be their sad interpreter.  
No newes but black could force a souldiers teares.  
*Antigone is dead.*

*Dir.* Not dead, my Lord,  
But lyes among the dead. *Æm.* How man ? Expound  
This Ænigmatike sorrow. *Dir.* In a tombe,  
Where neuer more she shall behold the day  
Nor *Phæbus* splendour, by the Kings command,  
Is faire *Antigone* enclod'd aliue——

To

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

To famish there and dy. *Am.* Enough, enough!  
Shut vp aliue to starue, oh horrid doome!  
As if that death alone, though nere so gentle,  
Had not beene punishment enough for her  
For such a cause as that; but yet this sentence  
Giues respite to her death, and leaues a way  
To our preuention; I must spend no time  
In thinking now; all action is requir'd.  
Thus it must be; be speedy faithfull friend,  
Runne to my mother, and with all the vowes,  
And vehement protestations that thou can'st  
From me assure her, if *Antigone*  
Be not releast in time, it shall not ly  
In all the power of earth to saue my life.  
Her loue I feare not, though my father now  
Haue cast his frowne vpon me, to this place  
Returne againe with all thy speed, whilest I  
Deuise some other meanes if that should faile.

*Dir.* Feare not my care, my Lord, but let me craue  
(By your owne worth I begge it, and that fauour  
Which you were euer pleased to reflect  
On my poore seruices) till I returne,  
Attempt no other course, I will be speedy,  
And if perswasions of the queene doe faile;  
Wee'll finde a way to saue the princesse life,  
But tis a desperate way, and must be vs'd  
The last of all. *Am.* Oh comfortable *Dircus*,  
Do but assure me that, and I shall owe  
More then my life, and all my fortunes to thee  
Ypon mine honour, Ile not stirre from hence

Till



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Till thou returne, nor stay thee now t'enquire  
More of the plot. *Dir.* I will out-fly the winde. *Exit.*

*Am.* Clos'd vp aliue within a tombe to starue!  
Oh horrid cruelty, I would I could  
Forget whose crime it were, that my free hate  
Might not be check'd by duty to a father.  
Should I approue his action, 'twere a sinne  
So great 'gainst vertue, as no time could pardon;  
Should I condemne it, I must then abhorre  
Th' offender, and that piety forbids.  
Oh why should piety, and vertue striue?  
That piety, which I so much admir'd  
In faire *Antigone*, my selfe transgresse  
In louing her crosse to my fathers will.  
Yet in obeying him I must approoue  
Her piety, or else condemne mine owne.  
What thoughts will reigne in this diuided brest,  
Till *Dirceus* doe returne? but courage heart,  
More strong is he, that can his doubts deferre  
Then he that knowne calamities does beare. *Exit.*

*Chorus of old men.*

(heauen,  
1: Oh smooth thy frowne at last, great queene of  
Let not vnhappy *Thebes* for euer feele  
The dire effects of thy too mindefull wrath:  
What could the wretched *Semeles* offence,  
Or poore *Alcmenas* errour more deserue,  
Then they themselves haue suffer'd from thy hand?  
Or if succeeding branches needes must bleed

*For*

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

For parents faults, before a goddesse wrath  
Can be appeas'd, could not *Aleons* wounds  
*Athamas* maddnesse, *Inoes* wofull death,  
Nor pittid *Oedipus* his fall suffice?

2. Could not the actions of great *Hercules*,  
Nor *Bacchus* glorious deedes, which all mankinde  
For euer shall renowne, weigh downe the crimes  
Of their vnhappy mothers, and such crimes,  
As only *Ioues* resistlesse power could force?

3. A feircer warre by farre now threatens *Thebes*  
Then that which old *Adrastus* with the aide  
Of all his rash confederates could make.  
The mighty *Theseus*, whose all-conquering hand  
No Kingdome yet with safety could withstand,  
Arm'd with a cause, in which the prayers and wish  
Of nations ioyne, is marching towards vs.

1. In vaine, alas, did we expect an end  
Of this dire warre, when both the princes dy'd,  
When th' *Argines* fled, must our owne victory  
Become our greife? and draw vpon vs now  
A greater ruine then our foile had done?

2. It must, it must, since *Creons* cruelty,  
Most vnexpected, barbarous cruelty  
Will haue it so, oh friend, I could belieue,  
Were not the noble *Aemon-Creons* sonne,  
And heire apparent to our Diadem,  
We had beene happyer farre t' haue beene subdu'd  
Then brought by victory to such obedience.

3 True friend, there's all our trust, the gods in nought  
But that braue Princes life, haue left vs hope

Of



## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Of any future fauour to redresse  
The miseries, which we so long haue felt.  
But for this imminent, nay present danger  
What were we best to doe?

1. Advise the King

Rather to change his purpose, then expose  
His weakened Kingdome to great *Thesens* fury.  
Though he should proue neuer so obstinate:  
Better that any one for good aduice  
Should suffer from his fury, then the land  
In generall should smart. 2. You counsell well,  
But who should be the man? 3. There's none so fit  
As old *Tiresias*, that most holy man,  
Taught from the gods aboue, whose words by all  
Our *Theban* Princes haue beene long esteem'd  
As oracles, him *Creon* will obey.

1. Then thither let vs, and with him aduise  
How to redresse our present miseries.

## *Actus Quintus.*

*Euclidice, Dirceus.*

**T**Hat was my feare before, I thought my sonne  
Too farre in loue to beare, with patience,  
His Ladies death, and therefore did entreat (moou'd  
The King with teares, and sighs, that would haue  
A rocke of flint, but hee more hard then rocks,  
Deafer then Northerne winds, with rage repul'd

E

My

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

My oft repeated suite, and now, ay,  
What most I fear'd is proou'd, my sonne will dy;  
For he has vow'd neuer to pardon her.

*Dir.* Must I returne the Prince this killing newes?

*Eur.* No gentle *Dircus*, stay a little while,  
Twill not be long before the King returne,  
He mooue him once againe.

*Dir.* Your highnesse pardon,  
Not for the world would I delay the time—  
Vpon vncertainties; I feare I haue  
Already stay'd too long: My quicke returne  
Is th' only meanes to keepe the prince aliue.  
Please it your highnesse then when I am gone  
To mooue the King, and feare not, gracious madam,  
The Princes life a while how ere. *Exit Dircus.*

*Eur.* Farewell,  
True faithfull *Dircus*, all the gods assist  
Thy good entents, and blesse thy loyalty.

*Enter Creon.*

*Cre.* What, weeping still?

*Eur.* Would I could weepe my selfe  
Like *Niobe* to marble, and become  
A wofull tombe to *Emon*, whom my wombe  
With fates disastrous brought into the world,  
My vertuous *Emon*. *Cre.* Why, is *Emon* dead?

*Eur.* Why doe you aske, that meane to murder him?

*Cre.* How? murder him? *Eur.* Yes in *Antigone*  
His most inseparable loue. *Cre.* Must then  
Th' audacious giglot, liue vnpunished,  
To braue a King?

*Eur.*



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

*Eur.* Were kings ordain'd to kill  
Vertues true seruants, and controll her lawes?

*Enter Tiresias, Chorus senum.*

*Tir.* Where is the king?

*Cre.* Hee's heere. What mischief now  
Com'st thou to viter, neuer from thy tongue  
Flow'd any good to me. *Tir.* A guilty man  
Was neuer pleas'd with truth, but heare me, *Creon.*  
I come to thee sent from the wrathfull gods  
To let thee know thy guilt, and punishment.  
Great plagues from heaven, if *Tiresias*  
Truly diuine, are threaten'd 'gainst thy house.  
When I for thee vnthankfull man prepar'd  
A sacrifice within, the open'd beast  
No signes but sad and fatall did afford.  
None but th' infernall gods deign'd to appeare.  
The blood was blacke, the burning entrailes gaue  
No flame at all, but darkely did consume,  
Mouldring away to ashes, and with blacke  
Vnsauoury smoake clouded the fearefull ayre.  
Vnto our augury no birds at all  
But sad, and balefull birds of night appear'd.  
Nor to our orizons would th' inuoked gods  
Vouchsafe an answer, but in signes alone  
Declar'd their wrath. The cause of these their threats  
Against thy house is for thy cruelty  
To good *Antigone*, and if she dy  
These plagues will surely fall.

*Eur.* Can we auoide them.  
By sparing her? *Tir.* The gods aboue relent

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

At humane penitence, and heare their prayers,  
Nor like the fiends are they inexorable.

*Eur.* No longer, *Creon*, shalt thou now deny me  
Since heauen is ioyn'd with my petition.

*Tir.* You are not constant in persisting thus,  
But obstinate. *Eur.* Now I renew my suite.

*Cbo.* In which we bend our knnes, release, O king,  
For *Thebes*, for *Ammons* sake, that vertuous maide,  
And to preuent a feirce and cruell warre,  
Vouchsafe to grant our suite, and giue vs leaue  
To bury those dead *Gracians* in the field.

*Cre.* No more of them; that last must not be granted,  
For our command is past too farre already,  
And must be iustifi'd, not changed now.  
But for the life of that *Antigone*,  
Although it cannot suite well with our iustice  
To pardon her rebellious stubbornnesse,  
Yet shee is thine *Eurydice*, to thee  
Do we referre her wholly; take this ring,  
And absolute power to dispose of her,  
Either to pardon, or to punishment.

*Eur.* The gods reward thee for't; Ile goe my selfe  
And bring her out with speede from that sad place;  
Heauen grant that grieue haue not already kill'd her.

*Nuntius, Creon.*

*Nun.* To armes, my Lord, if any armes so soone  
Can rescue *Thebes* from quicke destruction.  
The mighty *Thebes* threatens you at hand.

*Creon.*



## The Tragedy of Antigone.

*Creon.* Why let him come: Should I esteeme the name  
Of *Theseus* such a buggebeare it should fright  
Me from my constant resolution?  
Haue our late conquests, haue the ouerthrowes  
Of *Argos* and *Mycene* taught the world  
Nothing of vs? looke on yon purple fields  
With slaughter dy'd, and learne what *Thebes* can doe,  
Where *Capanais*, and stout *Tydeus*  
*Parthenopaus* and *Hippamedon*  
Ly weltering in their gores, and should we then  
So tremble at the threates of *Theseus*?  
No power must daunt me; 'tis not Kingly now  
Vpon constraint to change my rough decree:  
Though I relented now, though my soft breast  
Were mou'd with piety, yet thought of honour  
Would conquer that, as now it conquers feare,  
The feare of *Theseus* hand; nor haue I left  
A place for wisdom now; it comes too late;  
I must preuent or meeete my instant fate.

*Dircus Aemon.*

(seeme

*Dir.* Yonder's the tombe, my Lord, which though it  
Too hard, and solid for our strength to force,  
I know a place will open presently.

*Aem.* Then let vs breake this wealthy Cabinet,  
And take from thence a iewell, which the ransome  
Of all the Kings on earth would be a price  
To poore to purchase: Knew'st thou, happy caue,  
Or knew the world what true vnuaiew'd wealth  
Thy bare vnpolish'd bosome did containe,

## The Tragedy of Antigone.

Thou would'st despise the richest temples rear'd  
On Marble Columnes, and high-roof'd with gold;  
To thee would men with adoration come  
As to a place more sacred then the caue  
That nourish'd *Cretan Ioue*, then *Bacchus Nisa*,  
Or the *Ocean Mount*, from whence in flames  
The great *Alcides* mounted to the sky.  
But I forget my selfe, I first must know  
Whether I liue or no; for in that caue,  
Not heere does *Aemon* breath. *Antigone.*

*Anti.* Who calls *Antigone*? is it my *Aemon*?

*Aem.* *Dirceus* I liue; heardst thou that heavenly  
Which has inspir'd a happier life into me (voice  
Then my creation did. Lets loose no time  
In this sweete businesse. *Dir.* Ile ope the tombe  
Immediatly, my Lord. *Aem.* Sad *Thebes* adieu,  
Ile finde some happier countrey to conuey  
My enuy'd treasure to. Possess of her  
I shall be richer then the *Theban* crowne  
Can make me; speake how fares my fairest loue;  
Shall we be gone? *Ant.* I would, my dearest *Aemon*,  
Be gone with thee rather then liue; but fate  
Too cruell, fate preuents it.

*Aem.* How? what fate  
Can let our iourney, if thy loue consent?

*Anti.* I loue thee, *Aemon*, better then my life,  
And neuer truly wish'd to liue till now,  
But now I cannot liue.

*Aem.* Oh doe not mocke  
My ioyes, *Antigone*, or if thou dost not,

Tell



*The Tragedy of Antigone.*

Tell me what sad disaster can befall.

*Ant.* That sad disaster is befall'n already;  
Fearing the paines that such a lingring death  
Might bring vpon me, I haue tane already  
A gentle poison downe, which long before  
'Gainst some such dire occasion I prepar'd,  
I feele it worke; my vitall spirits faile.  
My dearest loue farewell. Liue long and happy;  
Let fate hereafter recompence to thee  
What ere her cruelty 'gainst me has wrought,

*Aem.* No fate can make me happy, I am lost  
Beyond her cure. *Dir.* What end of tragedyes  
Can wofull *Thebes* for euer hope to see  
After this sorrow. Oh I more then feare  
The Princes fury;

*Aem.* Her white soule is fled.  
What vnsubstantiall bubbles are the best  
Of humane ioyes? how from the top of all  
My hopes and comforts in one fatall minute  
Has enuious fortune throwne me downe againe  
Into the depth of misery, and woe.  
Oh fortune how extreme thou art in all  
Thy fauours and thy frownes!

*Dir.* Most noble prince,  
Collect that strength of man, which all the world  
Expects from you, and arme your selfe to beare  
With fitting patience this calamity.  
The passiue fortitude is great and noble  
As is the actiue. *Aem.* Strike that string no more,  
Doe not in vaine torment a desperate man

*The Tragedy of Antigone.*

With thy dull counsell: Tis as possible  
Thou should'st perfwade a dead man to arise  
After his soule is fled, as me to liue.

Now shee is dead, I doe coniure thee *Dircus*  
By all the loue thou bearest me, by that faith  
Which I haue euer found and priz'd in thee,  
To leaue me heere.

*Dir.* My Lord, I will obey;  
And thus I take my leaue.

*Dyes.*

*Aem.* Too cruell *Dircus*.

Was I not miserable enough before,  
But thou must loade my sufferings with thy death?  
What cause hadd'st thou to dy? thou hast not lost  
A loue, why should my losse extend so farre  
As to the ruine of so braue a friend?

Thy death has iniur'd faire *Antigone*,  
And made a strange Diuision in my griefe.  
For all the sorrow which this breast could hold,  
Was due to her before. I must encroach  
Vpon her right in spending teares for thee.  
My breast's too narrow for so great a griefe,  
And must be quickly open'd. Thou pure soule  
Of my *Antigone*, which still suruiu'st,  
Though this faire palace be demolish'd quite  
By deaths vngentle hand, thou heauenly substance,  
True obiect of a chaste, and spotlesse loue,  
Thy *Aemon* comes; and from these bonds of nature  
Flyes forth to meete thee in the other world,  
To wedd thee there; to finish there the rites  
Of long-cross'd loue, and tast eternall sweetes:

*Dyes.*

*Ianthus.*



# The Tragedy of Antigone.

*Ianthus, Aephytus, Eurydice.*

*Ian.* Oh horrid spectacle! see *Aephytus*,  
The Prince, *Antigone*, and *Direus* dead.

*Aepb.* All dead? *Eur.* Ay me.

*Ian.* Look to the Queene, she sownes (her  
*Aepb.* Alas, tis more then so; cold death has seiz'd  
I feare, beyond recovery, Lett's in,  
And certifie the King, who now may see.  
The dire effects of his rash cruelty.

*Theseus, Chorus Thebanorum.*

*The.* Our warre's already ended, and the death  
Of savage *Creon*, whose dire soule is fled  
To pacifie the *Argives* wandring ghosts,  
Hath satisf'd our iustice, heere we sheath  
Our sword againe, and free your towne from feares.  
And now enterre with fitting obsequies  
The Carcasses of all your slaughter'd foes.  
Let cruell *Creon* too, though he at all  
Deserve it not, haue rites of funerall.

*Cre.* Those pious rites will we performe with ioy,  
And thanks to mighty *Theseus*, may the Gods.  
Assist thee euer; and great *Hercules*  
Beholding thy braue actions from the sky  
Reioyce, and not disdaine at all to be  
Esteem'd thy æquall by posterity.

*The.* Send backe *Argia* to her father's court

With

## *The Tragedy of Antigone.*

With faire attendance ; and tis left to you

To place the *Theban* scepter where tis due.

*Cho.* *Thebes* humbly bowes to mighty *Theseus*,

And layes her crowne and scepter at his feete.

*The.* No ; still let *Thebes* be govern'd by her owne;

'Twas not our warres intention to enthrall

Your land, but free it from a tyrants yoake ;

And to preserve the conquer'd, not destroy them.

We drew the sword of iustice, not of conquest,

Ambitiously to spread our Kingdomes bounds,

But to auenge the lawes of nature broke ;

This act being done, *Theseus* is peace againe.

Souldiers march on to *Athens*. *Thebes* adieu.

Now let mankind enioy a happy peace ;

Oh let no monsters breede on earth, to glut

Themselves with human slaughter, let no theeues

Infest the woods ; no tyrants staine the cities

With blood of innocents ; but if such monsters

Must needes be bred to plague the wretched earth,

'Gainst nature, and her holy lawes to strive,

Let them appeare while *Theseus* is aliue.

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FINIS.

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